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18 May 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with the Inspector General

1. On Friday 15 May at 10:45 a.m. I met with the Agency Inspector General, Mr. Gordon Stewart, in his office.

2. Following a few brief amenities Mr. Stewart stated he was studying the rate information enters the Agency, the use of Computers, our valuable records, and so forth. He said he has had [redacted] from his staff examining the volume of material received from NSA and the material needed for servicing our requirements. He said [redacted] recently completed a survey of the Office of Computer Services. His staff also is doing a survey of [redacted] organization in the Clandestine Services and this includes the Registry and Systems Group. Mr. Stewart said he will add [redacted] to these studies later as well as [redacted] who is still involved with the OCS survey. He has [redacted] working with these part-time.

3. Mr. Stewart then said that seven months ago Mr. Hugh Cunningham visited him and suggested that Mr. Stewart take a serious interest in the storage of Agency records and the preservation of valuable Agency documents. The Inspector General then addressed his question to me. He said "I would like to ask how you see our Records Problem".

4. I responded that the Agency records problem was very large and extremely complex. I feel that records procedures have an impact on every facet of the Agency both in the operational as well as the administrative areas. I said I felt the Agency records systems were doing surprisingly well despite the low priority given to records management. I pointed out that this was substantiated in studies by his office. The most recent being by Mr. [redacted] for his office. I mentioned that in 1968 [redacted] also did a survey for Mr. Bannerman.

5. In response to his reference I explained the background of Mr. Hugh Cunningham being appointed by Mr. Helms to coordinate the Agency's Contribution to the Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library. We spoke of my work with Mr. Cunningham on that Project, his visits

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to the Records Center and our procedures for transferring documents to the National Archives Presidential Libraries or to our Records Center when the documents were too sensitive to go to Houston. During this Project Mr. Cunningham had made references to me of the need for preserving historical records.

6. Mr. Stewart asked if we were in contact with the Historical Staff. I assured him we were and that Prof. Ehrmann had visited the Records Center and that I have met with him frequently. I said I felt we had a mutual interest in records preservation and our experience with National Archives made our procedural concepts somewhat compatible. I explained our mutual interest in establishing a formal Archives function in the Agency and that proposals for such a possibility are being drafted. I said that Col. White and Prof. Ehrmann were aware of this Agency Archives concept and did not oppose the initial idea, although I emphasized the point that this was still being developed and is one of several solutions to the records problems.

7. Mr. Stewart asked several questions about microfilming systems, procedures, equipment, and space gains. This seemed a personal interest and information development because considerable time was spent on it and the questions concerned equipment details unrelated to Agency activities. The conversation ranged the full gamut of microforms from the traditional films on through aperture cards, microfiche and on to super-fiche with specifics on related equipment and examples of their use.

8. During the morning the discussion had many tangents and asides including my American University doctoral studies, his European experiences and friends (including the meaning of the word "fiche" and one French researcher who always referred to the paper "Fiche" he prepared, which were note slips just like the term microfiche film slips). He took notes at various times, but it seemed they were more often questions or instructions to himself for other areas of study rather than a specific reference of mine. Only when we spoke of records volumes and statistics can I be certain he noted them, and I explained the constant fluctuations in these statistics due to our dynamic records operations. He was interested in the 200,000 cu. ft. of records in Agency offices and the 100,000 cu. ft. in the Center. He was intrigued and pursued other minutiae of safe space, floor space, forms costs, microfilm reduction ratios, and various types of records storage equipment. When I mildly protested that such details were of concern to me but were taking his time he rejected the notion and insisted that day-to-day management had to make decisions under pressure but that he would be a poor inspector if he made judgments to meet deadlines.

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9. He asked about the legal requirements of records retention. He asked for copies of legal documents which specified the Agency obligation to keep certain documents. I explained the Federal Records Act of 1950 and the General Records Schedule produced by National Archives which governs disposal or retention of those records common to several Agencies. I explained the procedure we used to get special approval from National Archives and Congress for records unique to our Agency. He wondered if we had gotten approval for our CI records and I said I was not certain, that we did have a schedule for several DDP records but there were some files DDP did not want to have processed outside the Agency. He asked if we have established "Offices of Record" for Agency files. I said we were doing this in the "Retention Plans" but that only DDS&T was finished. The DDP draft has been in coordination several months and the DDI and DDS Retention Plans are being drafted. In the interim the Records Control Schedules do indicate Office of Record requirements to a degree. He asked for a copy of the Federal General Schedule and said he would get the one I gave to [ ] the Executive Registry.

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10. Mr. Stewart's Secretary interrupted at 11:50 to remind him of his luncheon date. He asked if I would return at 1:30. I assured him I would, but demurred over the intrusion on his time. He insisted he was very interested and was getting a much better appreciation of records ramifications. I said we should touch a few of the positive actions that have been taken to meet the current records problems. We adjourned.

11. At 1:30 Mr. Stewart and I resumed our discussion in his office. As in the morning, his questions followed no discernable pattern and his interests seemed very general. The focus was not particularly on records, papers, nor automation, neither was it data processing or information storage and retrieval. It was all of these without emphasis as to programs, policies, personnel, or systems. The meeting was more a discussion than a series of questions. He ventured several opinions and speculations without intending a response, somewhat as though he was organizing some of his own yet undeveloped ideas about the complexity of office records systems. Among these were his views on possible past miscalculations in the volumes of records the DDI could store and in the WALNUT system. He also mused about contradictions in satellites and Laos. Since these were not questions I felt no need to respond.

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12. The new technologies were discussed and I said I felt confident we would have more records than ever in the future. The media would be different but the volume would certainly increase. This point he questioned further and made note of. I explained that I was asked this question during the DDS examination of the records problem several months ago. Since then I have double checked my position and I find many consultants and records experts hold that same view. I explained about the rapid growth of magnetic tapes volumes which now make up 10% of the Federal records Volume and are still growing. Our 20,000 tapes are about three and a half percent of our records volume. My elaboration indicated the presence of 3,000 cu. ft. of NPIC films in the Records Center. Their existence was not anticipated in 1957 when the Center was built. I said I expect a similar flood of material from projects currently being planned. These multimillion dollar projects do examine and plan for some of their side-effects but I don't think the plans go so far as to include the consideration of funds for a storage facility for their records and films after they become too inactive to keep in the operations area but too valuable to destroy. I pointed out that we have 90,000 reels of microfilm in storage and explained these films average 2,000 to 3,000 images per reel. Therefore, since a cubic foot of records is about 2,000 pages we have about 90,000 cu. ft. of records on film and this is almost as much as we have of hard copy in storage. I said there are even greater amounts of microfilm in the offices and I expect to see the amount increase drastically in the next five years. Thus the media will change in some areas but they have to because the information volume and requirements are growing. Thus they turn to new technologies to cope with the heavier demands. But, despite the compaction the net volumes increase with the activities instead of decreasing. The temporary reduction following the conversion is very short-lived.

13. The problems of storage space led to a review of the Records Center capacity and its evolution. The new motorized shelving led to other uses of it in the Agency and other equipment. A tangent led to a discussion of the laser beam device as a mass memory storage system for machine language data. This in turn prompted Mr. Stewart to inquire about our advising [ ] about such developments for his long-range planning. I explained that [ ] had briefed [ ] and his staff about the records problems and the result was that [ ] had agreed with our original contention that it was more economical and efficient to build an addition on the Records Center, but Col. White rejected any construction proposals. I also explained that I had arranged with [ ] staff to have the engineers come in and give them a briefing on the laser device and that I wrote an evaluation of the device which was circulated to the Information Processing Coordinators last year.

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14. Another tangent developed from the storage discussion. I said the volume of records on hand was a problem of immediate concern but that I felt this was but the visible manifestation of other records problems elsewhere. We can never expect to overcome the records disposal problem until we manage the records creation and records systems. All of which comes back to the need for a total records management program. The records are inanimate. They do nothing. Someone must physically take action involving records and this requires people. Unless the components assign someone to cope with their records, nothing will happen. Our Central Staff has the program and guidance to offer but too few are available to carry it out. Everyone carrying the title of Records Officer has other more pressing duties..

15. Unless greater priority is given to full-time action in the components no progress will result. For ten years our volume increased 6,000 cu. ft. per year. In the last Fiscal year we had a net decrease of 4,000 ft. and the trend this fiscal year is toward another net decrease of 2,000 ft. But thousands of employees were specifically challenged and assigned to the task during this past year and a half. Will we drop back to the previous net growth or continue to decrease slightly? It depends on the expressed interest of top management and people assigned to the task. Mr. Stewart then asked about the specific people and staffs in each Directorate and how good a job they were doing. I was relieved when another tangent developed from still another question because I did not feel inclined to enter upon so complex and delicate an issue at such a session as this. To the question of the Central Staff relations with the Components, I said that each Directorate wished to preserve its autonomy and the question of Central authority was difficult, but there was a need for continuing review of the records programs in each area. I said our Central Staff was doing this review to a degree but we were not reporting our findings. In fact one of the alternatives we had considered was to propose that Records Program reviews be included in IG Surveys. Mr. Stewart answered that this was just going through his mind at that very moment.

16. I had insisted on two different occasions and again at my departure that Mr. Stewart meet with [redacted] to discuss the Agency records problem and information processing developments. I explained that we had worked together on the records problems these past three years and several actions have been taken and several other proposals are being developed. I said that [redacted] position in the Support Directorate and his planning for several interrelate functions covered many issues to which I was not privy. I said I

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felt his overall requirements would provide a more tempered view of records than mine. Mr. Stewart said he felt my position was an objective one and he had not felt any undue pressure from me. He said he would look forward to a meeting with [REDACTED] I departed at 3:30 p.m.

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[REDACTED]  
CIA Records Administration Officer

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